

## Examples of good practices

Workplace-oriented qualification for unemployed (Austria)  
Designing personalised training plans for unemployed people in cooperation with companies and VET institutes.

Coop Food School (Denmark)  
Retail chain Coop developed its own VET programme for butchers, bakers and delicatessen assistants.

Trimola Campus and Robola lab project (Finland)  
A unique learning environment supporting cooperation between local educational institutions and companies.

Dual Study Programmes (Germany)  
Combining academic studies with vocational training is an increasingly popular segment of the German skills formation system.

Higher Technical Institutes (Italy)  
Providing technical and technological skills in strategic areas for the country's economic development.

Educate for Business (Latvia and Lithuania)  
Increasing the competitiveness and productivity of the new generation labour force in the Latvian-Lithuanian border region.

Techwise Twente (The Netherlands)  
Organising higher VET-training tailored to the needs of the manufacturing industry.

Cooperative education (Serbia)  
Introducing elements of the German dual education system in Serbia.

Step Ahead (Slovak Republic)  
Ensuring that the supply of skilled car technicians matches the demand from the automotive businesses.

Labour Foundation of the Construction sector (Spain)  
Providing businesses and workers in the construction sector with the skills and knowledge to develop a more professional, qualified, and educated sector.

Tech Partnership (United Kingdom)  
A network of employers to create the skills for the digital economy.

Nestlé needs YOUth (Global)  
Multinational company Nestlé created 20 000 jobs, apprenticeships and traineeships across Europe between 2014 and 2016.

## Links

European Alliance for Apprenticeships  
[ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1147](http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1147)

European Pact for Youth  
[www.csreurope.org/pactforyouth](http://www.csreurope.org/pactforyouth)

European Vocational Skills Week  
[ec.europa.eu/vocational-skills-week](http://ec.europa.eu/vocational-skills-week)

The Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition  
[ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/digital-skills-jobs-coalition](http://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/digital-skills-jobs-coalition)

The Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills  
<http://europa.eu/!Xt38Td>

Erasmus +  
[ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/)

European Social Fund  
[ec.europa.eu/esf/](http://ec.europa.eu/esf/)

The information in this leaflet is the result of the study '*Business cooperating with vocational education and training providers for quality skills and attractive futures*' (2017), commissioned by the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion from the European Commission. The study was elaborated by Panteia, LSE Enterprise and Oxford Research.

Link to study:  
<http://europa.eu/!Mh37Fc>

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**Business cooperating  
with vocational education  
and training providers  
for quality skills  
and attractive futures**

**Businesses**

**VET providers**



Cooperation between businesses and vocational education and training (VET) providers is very important for both the quality of education and for making sure future employees have the skills which companies need. VET can play a crucial role in tackling many of the most pressing challenges that Europe is faced with today, such as competitiveness, youth unemployment and social inclusion.

This study uses **three dimensions** to classify VET-business cooperation:

- The VET process (steps in the VET processes)
- Topics of cooperation
- The level of cooperation (individual to global)

The study identified cases that were relevant for **a broad array of topics**:

- Matching supply and demand
- Work-based learning
- Digital skills
- Innovation (including digitalisation aspects not related to skills development)
- Entrepreneurial skills
- Mobility
- Social inclusion
- Raising awareness

Moreover, the study identified main enabling and constraining factors for VET-business cooperation.

### Enabling factors

- ▶ Full participation of business and their associations in the development and governance of the VET system.
- ▶ Customisation of the cooperation to businesses, providers and learners.
- ▶ Cost-effective systems that reward businesses.
- ▶ Low administrative burden on business engagement with providers and learners.
- ▶ Sectoral alliances between business and training providers, ensuring that all the stakeholders 'speak the same language'.
- ▶ Involvement of intermediary bodies such as chambers of commerce, industry and crafts, in particular to ease SMEs participation.
- ▶ Permeability between vocational and academic tracks.

### Constraining factors

- ▶ Lack of effective dialogue between business, government and providers.
- ▶ Insufficient ownership of the needs of individual businesses and to a lesser degree, of providers, teachers, trainers and learners.
- ▶ High costs of training making companies, in particular SMEs, reluctant to invest.
- ▶ Lack of information about benefits of and opportunities in VET.
- ▶ Limited business' and students' participation due to low reputation of VET in some countries.
- ▶ Insufficient investments by governments (e.g. in terms of providing up-to-date equipment to training providers).
- ▶ Lack of capacity (also funding) on the provider side.
- ▶ Limited possibilities for innovative cooperation on work-based learning due to labour legislation.

### Findings

- ▶ There is no 'standard' recipe for effective cooperation...
- ▶ ... but there are strong economic arguments for businesses to cooperate with VET providers.

### Recommendations to policy makers

#### *Recognise and facilitate*

- ▶ High quality training with significant business involvement can be inspired by the "dual model" combining school-based learning with practice in a company. However, policy makers should not simply copy successful models from other countries.
- ▶ Policy makers can ease businesses to cooperate with VET providers. Their contribution can include financial support and non-financial support, for instance learning facilities to be shared among all partners and, more generally, the removal of barriers hindering effective cooperation.
- ▶ Public institutions at all levels should recognise the potential of VET-business cooperation.

#### *Customise*

- ▶ It is not useful to 'force' VET-business cooperation – it should rather follow from the needs of business, VET providers and learners.
- ▶ Although governance systems are very important enablers of high quality and attractive VET, they should allow for sufficient flexibility to adapt the VET-business cooperation to the specific needs of business.

#### *Further study*

- ▶ Additional research on what works in VET-business cooperation is recommended.
- ▶ A clear focus on specific aspects of VET-business cooperation would provide new insights for further improvements.